Quantity of Gold coming into the Country

*226. SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of gold that has come to the country so far after Government began allowing bringing of 5 Kg. of gold by expatriates since 1992;

(b) whether the ceilling on the quantum of gold allowed to be brought-in has been enhanced and what is the ceiling now;

(c) how much gold has come to the country under special import licence;

(d) how much gold has come through NIR route so far; and

(e) whether Government are considering to adopt open door policy for gold import?;

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) 900.917 tonnes of gold has been imported upto 28.2.97 since the Government introduced the scheme of allowing non Resident Indians to bring 5 Kg. of gold each on payment of duty.

(b) Yes Sir. The ceiling has been enhanced to 10 Kg. w.e.f. 1.1.97.

(c) 83.054 tonnes of gold has been imported under Special Import Licence Scheme upto 28.2.97.

(d) 900.917 tonnes of gold has been imported through NRI route upto 28.2.97.

(e) The existing scheme of import of gold by Non Resident Indians under Notification No. 117/92-Cus dated 1.3.92 and 171/94 dated 30.9.94 as amended, is open to all Non Resident Indians who have stayed abroad for more than six months. Similarly, the import under Special Import Licence Scheme is open to all importers. Government is presently not considering any other scheme for import of gold.

Scheme for Waste Management in Hospitals

*227. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 374 given in the Rajya Sabha on 25th February, 1997 and state:

(a) the details of the scheme to deal with different kinds of wastes in private hospitals, nursing homes and Government hospitals;

(b) whether the guidelines have been made mandatory for all State hospitals; if so, the progress in different States; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) to (c) the Supreme Court of India had directed the concerned authorities in Delhi to install incinerators or adopt other alternatives for the safe disposal of hospital waste in all nursing homes/Hospitals having more than 50 beds. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has developed guidelines for the management of hospital waste and standards for incinerators. The guidelines drawn up by the CPCB have been made available to all State Government/U.Ts. on 07th March, 1997.

2. The subject of Hospital Waste Management was discussed in details during the last meeting of the Central Council of Health & Family Welfare where all State Health Ministers attended from 08th to 10th January, 1997. The Council adopted a Resolution which *inter-alia,* enjoined all hospitals in the country, whether in the Government sector or private sector, to initiate an appropriate hospital waste management system and to address issues relating to emission standards, creation of awareness, motivation of staff, the need to draw up detailed specifications, training and protection of workers.

3. The Draft Bio-medical Waste (Management & Handling) Rules, 1995